WOMEN AT THE OVENS.

Men Whose Half-Clad Wives Toil Near Blazing Furnaces.

Hungarian Employes in the Pennsylvania Coke Regions—Their Constant Coming and Going—A Disgusting Spectacle.

[Cor. Philadelphia Press.]

Those portions of Westmoreland and Fayette counties which constitute what is known as the Connellsville coke region are among the richest and most thickly-settled sections of the state. Hamlets, villages, towns and miniature cities are crowded closely together. From almost every eminence may be seen the spires of a score of churches or school-houses, or the flame and smoke of a thousand coke-ovens. Evidences of an advanced state of civilization are everywhere abundant. Yet, side by side with these, and part of the whole, are sights and sounds which suggest the most oppressed peasants of Europe. Women bearing heavy burdens on their heads, and whose costumes consist of loose calico sacks, skirts of dark, coarse material, that scarcely cover their knees, with heavy, high-top, coarse shoe boots, are seen trudging along the streets, working like men in the hot glare of the coke oven, or, perhaps, making known their wants to the merchants by signs or gutteral exclamations.

Sometimes they are accompanied to the stores by swarthy, thick-set men, wearing heavy red shirts, instead of coats, curiously shaped caps, and high boots or wooden shoes. But the two sexes are rarely seen together in the towns. The men do not often leave the vicinity of their homes, which are usually close to the coke ovens.

These strange people are Hungarians, representatives of a class so widely differing in their manners and customs from others who have sought homes in the United States that, in this coke region, where each of them are now employed, they are regarded by their fellow-workmen with an antipathy only equaled by the feeling in certain parts of the country against Chinamen. The Hungarians are densely ignorant; filthy in their habits beyond description; have no knowledge of and for the most common rules of society; make no effort to learn the language or assimilate with the people of the country, and seem to have no ambition except to earn enough money to enable them to purchase a few acres of ground in their native land.

Hungarians were first employed in the coke industry at the Morewood works, in the outskirts of this town, in the spring of 1880. The former employes were on strike, and a number of these unknown foreigners were furnished for an employment agent to take the places of the strikers. The year that followed was the most prosperous in the history of the coke trade. The number of ovens increased from 3,600 in the spring of 1879 to 8,500 in the fall of 1881, and the demand for workmen was so great that Hungarians, who were notified by the first-comers of the condition of affairs, found employment without difficulty.

Few of those who came first are in the region now. The earnings of three years, and sometimes a less period, were usually sufficient to satisfy their dreams of wealth, and as a result, they are constantly coming and going. The restriction of production which has been going on for a year past has had the effect of diminishing the number of arrivals somewhat, and at present there are in this region not more than 1,500 Hungarians, about one-sixth of the total number of men employed. It has been charged that they were imported under contract, but this is emphatically denied by the superintendents of the various companies. They receive the same wages as employes of other nationalities, and in some cases earn more than the others.

Information concerning the women who aided their husbands in drawing the coke from the ovens was obtained from the superintendent of one of the largest plants in the region. He spoke of the matter as if it were a commonplace subject.

Walking along the long line of ovens in the valley, a number of women were seen standing before hot ovens or loading the coke into cars. The labor of drawing coke requires comparatively little skill, but is more arduous than that of any other branch of the industry. The coke is in a solid mass. It is broken and drawn out of the oven with a long iron tool resembling a hoe, and so heavy that few American women would think of attempting to lift it.

The wives of these Magyars wield it with apparent ease. They are all powerful women, and, usually, when at work before the ovens or loading the cars, are barefooted, with their limbs exposed to the knees and with bodies covered as scantily as possible. They are not in the employ of the company, and it is stated that the superintendents have frequently attempted to keep them out of the yards. These orders were issued, however, when the sight of a woman doing a man's work was novel. They were disregarded then and are not thought of now.

Few of the women work all day. They come at noon with their husband's dinner, and while the latter eats and rests the work goes on. If there are small children in the family they are taken to the yards with the dinner-bucket and left to take care of themselves.

It is in the homes of these people that the most disgusting sights are witnessed. They all live in houses owned by the company, which employs the head of the family. Those in the Morewood valley, near this town, are of frame and stand in long rows along the hillside. The houses occupied by the Hungarians are easily distinguished from the others. The square porch leading to the front door is invariably boarded up and made to do duty as a pig-pen. There are no blinds or curtains before the windows, but from the window sills hang slices of bacon and rough pork.

To cross the porch and open the door requires courage, for the close rooms are filthy and the odors nauseating.

One room visited by your correspondent was occupied by a husband and wife and a boarder. The principal articles of furniture were a pine bedstead near the stove, a square table, three chairs and a bench. The last article was used as a bed by the boarder. Coffee had been boiled in a wash-boiler, and flour on a dirty chair near the stove indicated that the chair had been used as a bread tray. The family were eating dinner. Their repast consisted of coffee, rye bread and bacon. The coffee was in a large vessel, which was passed from one to another, and from which all drank. There were no knives or forks on the table; the bread was literally broken, and the meat was taken from the pan with the fingers. The head of the house said that the family lived on 40 cents a day.

At another house, in four rooms, thirty-five boarders are fed and lodged. At this season of the year many of the young men sleep in the open air. By this means they manage to live for 25 and 30 cents a day.

The Greely party got within 452 miles of the pole.

BLOOD WILL TELL.

The Scheme of a Former Bostonian Now Residing in New York.

[New York Sun.]

A young man with a cold, impassive face and an air of entire contentment leaned over the desk of a fashionable up town hotel and watched the stream of men that eddied through the corridor. He wore the traditional diamond, and when he nodded carelessly to wealthy business men, influential citizens and well-known politicians they seemed to feel that they were honored, and they smiled. He seldom smiled. When he did it was with an air of reserve, as befits a man who knows his own importance.

A slim and sombre man, with well-brushed clothes, a high white hat, and a vapid smile drifted up to the desk, and, calling the clerk by name, remarked that it was a pleasant night.

"Yaas," drawled the clerk, looking him coldly in the eye.

"Things have been stupid down town to-day," ventured the visitor, with just a tinge of embarrassment.

"Yaas," said the clerk again.

"Is—is there anything for me?" the man with the white hat asked, after some hesitancy.

"Yaas," said the clerk for the third time. Then he looked about carelessly for a little while, examined his finger nails with some interest, talked a bit to a friend, and presently went to the letter rack. He skimmed over the mail rapidly, selected three large envelopes, all of fashionable appearance and addressed in feminine handwriting and tossed them to the inquirer. The man with the white hat picked them up and wandered off languidly to the reading-room.

"Did you notice that man?" said the clerk to the writer.

"Yes."

"Well, he's been at it now for four weary years. You can see what he is. He has no money, and his clothes are pretty far off, but he has as big a reputation out of New York for being a blood as any millionaire you could name. He comes from Boston, and he pretends that he is a broker here. He has used our letterheads, ink, and other facilities for years, and I happen to know that he has never spent a cent in this house since he came in here the first time four years ago. Then he bought a cigar at the stand there and asked us to look after his letters. You know any man can have his letters sent to a hotel, and the hotel must keep them until called for. I believe there is some law that bears on the subject. We have over a thousand letters here waiting for people to claim them. This hotel, as you know, has a big name through the country, and people who live here must spend considerable money. That's why so much mail comes here. It sort of gives a man tone when people think he's stopping at this house."

"But people usually stop here for a short time before they ask you to take care of their mail, don't they?"

The clerk smiled derisively. "Well, I should say not. If they did, we would be worth considerably more money. That man in the white hat is a fair sample of them all. We have hundreds like him. I found out exactly who and what he was through a suspicion I had once that he was crooked. I got the house detective to look him up, and found that he came from Boston. He lives over on Third avenue in a hall room that rents for $2 a week, and takes his meals at the free lunch counters. His friends in Boston think that he lives here, and he becomes a great blood when he goes home."

Seasons in Mexico.

[Cor. St. Louis Globe-Democrat.]

May and June are the hottest months in the city of Mexico. If one is too thickly clad at midday it is usually possible to take the shady side of the street. Since nobody is ever in a hurry it is, of course, quite unnecessary to walk in the sun. And when the new comer gets thoroughly Mexicanized he will stay indoors at midday. Umbrellas are sometimes useful as walking sticks or parasol; save in summer they are never wanted to shed rain. Just now the rainy season is on and we have had some tremendous showers. So has the country down below. The rainy season, in fact, ought to be called the showery season instead. It never rains drizzle, drizzle, after the eastern style, but it pours. And yet there is no continuous downfall. In June, July and August in Mexico rain descends almost every day in copious showers, but the summer sun shines with no less regularity between times, and every day has a clearing off. During eight months out of the twelve it is as certain, day by day, that the morrow will be pleasant as that the morrow will come.

It seems to be the American opinion that Mexico will make a good winter resort, but it is a country that it must be wise to keep out of in summer. This is a great mistake. Denver and Sante Fe are summer resorts; the towns of the Mexican plateau are no less fit to be. They are southern, but they are elevated, and high elevation countervails low latitude. In the summer, again, the face of nature is beautiful, while in the dry season it becomes withered and uninviting. But of course the contrast between northern American and Mexican winters is greater than between the summers of the two regions, and on the whole Mexico is a better country to flee to to escape cold than heat. Traveling suits, for men or women, ought to be dust proof. In the cities the upper classes display European fabrics and styles exclusively. Women of refinement appear almost universally without head covering. This is the only noticeable departure from the habits of their American cousins. The feet should be well shod. Soup will never be found at the hotels, and the better kinds are expensive in Mexico. As for the customs officials, courteous and just treatment is the rule. A visitor proposing to make a stay of much length beyond the Rio Grande, I should say, would do well to take from home whatever clothing or paraphernalia seems likely to be needed. For a brief tour light marching order is, of course, sensible.

The Lawn-Mower.

[Louisville Courier-Journal.]

Joaquin Miller tells how he is letting the vegetation in his front yard grow up with the country, and how he wouldn't allow a lawn-mower anywhere in sight of it for any amount. This may do very well in Washington, but in Louisville it wouldn't work at all. There would be 2,000 worthy old colored men, each of whom, with sickle or scythe, would call upon Mr. Miller, one by one, with "Boss, don't you want dat grass cut—it's agittin pow'ful high!" Lawn-mowers are not merely to keep a lawn in order. They are kept because the owner of the lawn hasn't time to hold a reception every day for his industrous colored fellow-citizens.

How He Spelled It.

A New York engraver recently made this mistake: "Mr. and Mrs.—respectfully request your presents at the marriage of their daughter."

Plantation Philosophy: De man dat would beat a hoss would beat a chile, but he wouldn't beat a grown pusson, case he's afeerd.

STEEPLE-CLIMBING.

An Occupation Which Is Fraught with Hidden Dangers.

Narrow Escapes from Death—Where Danger Lurks—Fiends Who Cut the Life-Line—Wages Received.

[Philadelphia Times.]

"I have been in this perilous business ever since the war," said Morris Rogers, at his boarding-house the other evening. "I am a steeple-climber and, so far as I know, the only man in the country who relies solely upon this trade for a living. There was another man who did the same work,"—and the narrator sighed—"but, poor fellow, he fell from the tower of the new structure of the Old South church, in Boston, and died after a few gasps on the pavement. He was a clever workman, full of original ideas and great in a sudden emergency. His name was Watson—Bill Watson. I was his helper for two years. He was the coolest man I ever knew. We were repairing a cross on the spire of a Catholic church in St. Louis. It was a small job, and he had taken it as a 'snap' and intended to finish it, off hand, in one afternoon. He was not as careful with his lines as he should have been. We ascended to the highest window in the spire and he put a pair of climbers on his feet (such as the telegraph line-men use) and went up a narrow ridge of beard to which the lightning-rod was made fast.

HIGH IN THE AIR.

"The ball was sixty feet above, and in less than five minutes he had a line around the cross and was lashed to it. He stood nearly 200 feet from the ground. Contrary to his usual custom he began at the base of the cross. He worked around rapidly, calling down to me, below, for more foil or more shellac as he progressed. Then I sent him in a small tin bucket, as the case might be, which he drew up by means of a small cord fastened to his waist. He had just received a roll of foil (for he had shellac that dried very quickly) in the sun when he said, in a perfectly natural tone:

"'Catch me, Morry.'

"An instant later I had him in my arms. He clutched the window sill and sprang into the landing. All he said was, 'Curse that rope. I have been afraid of it for some time.' His line had parted where it came in contact with the sharp edge of the cap of the steeple. He had felt the first strand part, had realized fully what had happened and had foreseen what was about to occur—all in five seconds. My catching him saved him from a hundred and eighty feet of a fall, but after eating a bite of luncheon he was back again and finished the job just as if nothing had happened."

WHERE DANGER LURKS.

"What kind of a steeple do you regard the most dangerous to scale?"

"A slate-covered spire," was the prompt reply. "There are many reasons why it is dangerous—reasons that would not occur to you. To enumerate a couple: The edge of a broken slate is often as sharp as a knife, and will cut the best manilla rope like soap when the strain of a man's body is on it. In putting on the slates a peculiarly finished nail, with a beaten head, is often used. Where there is a broken slate these nails are liable to work up, and they will nick a rope in such a way that you will never know it until you feel an ominous settling of the slender perch upon which you swing. That sensation is calculated to cause any man's hair to raise."

"Do you select your own ropes and fix all your own scaffoldings?"

"Indeed, I do," was the reply. "I carry all my tackle with me and am very particular who handles it. I have a compartment in my trunk in which I always carry about 400 feet of line. The best rope for this purpose is made of English hemp."

THE ROPE FIENDS.

"Do you examine the lines often?"

"Always after they have been used and before I go on them. You would hardly credit it, but there are men vile enough to cut a life-line so that it will break and kill the man who trusts himself on it. It is terrible to make a discovery of that kind. It unnerves a man more than an accident up in the air. Did I ever have it happen to me? Yes, once, in Chicago. But I don't like to talk about it, for a week later I saw the man who 'cored' my line fall backwards out of the fourth-story window. I can hear the dull crash of his crushed skull and broken bones yet. It was terrible."

"You speak of 'coring' a line; what do you mean?"

"Why, this," and the speaker drew a piece of rope from his pocket. Then he opened a sharp pocket-knife, and partly untwisting the rope cut the inside of the three strands nearly through. When the rope was retwisted the cuts were not discernible to the eye or to the touch. The harmless looking bit of line became an infernal machine.

"How do you detect a spot like that?" asked the reporter, who had already lost the place and sought it in vain in a piece of rope hardly three feet long.

"It is a severe test of skill," was Mr. Rogers' answer. "But it comes partly, I presume, from the instinct of self-preservation. Take 400 feet of line. I pass it rapidly through my hand thus," and the motion was illustrated by the steeple-climber with the fragment of rope in his hands. "Each fathom of line that passes through my hands is felt on every side. Then I place my right foot on the line and tighten it with my right hand, so, as I am reaching out with my left for another stretch of rope. It is something like the angler feeling the fish at his bait. I can feel that the line is weak. Then I locate the spot with my hands and eyes. If necessary I untwist the rope in places, thus."

PRICES FOR RISK.

"What are your terms?"

"I generally work by the job, now. You see, I have had so much experience that I can 'size up' a bit of work pretty accurately. Then, too, I know two-thirds of the towers and steeples in the United States and I can generally give a quotation by mail. I get a letter saying: 'We want the spire of our church repainted and the ball regilt. The steeple will need two coats of paint.' I know the height and circumference of the spire, the size of the gold ball on top and the length of time it will take the first coat of paint to dry. I calculate the actual expense for paint and leaf, the railroad fare and the cost of board for the number of days necessary. Then I add $25 a day for my wages and get a total. I telegraph them: 'Will paint your steeple next week, as required, for $580.' Of this sum $150 will represent materials and helper's wages, the balance my labor. I am reasonably independent, for I have several orders for steeples of churches, the corner-stone of which have just been laid. I have only recently returned east from Cincinnati, where I had several important jobs and one very narrow escape from death."

Arkansaw Traveler: Good sense doan hanker arter fine cloze. De stalk ain' neigh so bright arter de co'n is ripe.

THE CEREALS VERSUS MEAT.

De Lesseps Believes in More Grain and Less Cattle and Hogs.

[Eli Perkins in Chicago Tribune.]

England is a meat-eater, while France is a cereal-eater or an eater of bread and oil. The other day I had a long talk with Le Comte Ferdinand de Lesseps. In regard to the value of cereal for food, M. de Lesseps worked thousands of Italians, Turks, and Frenchmen on the Suez canal.

"Do you really think the cereals are stronger food than meat?" I asked.

"Certainly," he replied. "One pound of dry wheat or flour is worth as much as three pounds of wet beef. Scald the pound of flour and see! you have a gallon of mush; you could not eat it in three days. If you feed the cereals to cattle as they do in England it takes eight pounds of grain to make a pound of meat. So, why feed the grain to animal tramps? Why not eat it ourselves and do away with the surplus population of 50,000,000 cattle, hogs, and sheep—animal tramps! England is supporting perhaps 80,000,000 cattle, sheep, and hogs, and 40,000,000 people—or rather she supports her cattle and buys bread from America to feed her people. France supports 45,000,000 people and about 20,000,000 cattle, hogs, and sheep."

"Then you believe in raising more grain and less cattle and hogs?" I asked.

"Certainly. One acre of cereals in France will support five men, while it would take two acres of grass to support one steer; and, in the end, one man would eat the steer. The advantage of the cereals over meat is as 5 to 1. So, you see, the steer is an unnecessary tramp. The Englishman," continued De Lesseps, "insists on roast beef, every pound of which costs eight pounds of cereals. The Frenchman eats the cereals himself. He buys millions of gallons of cotton-seed oil in America at three cents per pound. This he eats in his salad, in his soup, and in his bread and pie crust. The Frenchman refines millions of gallons of American cotton-seed oil, sends it back to America, and sells it for 82 or 83 a gallon. Cotton-seed oil is superseding peanut oil, and olive oil is almost a thing of the past. For years the peanut crop of Tennessee and North Carolina has been sent to Marseilles and made into olive oil. Cotton-seed oil has been found by the French to be better and cheaper than peanut oil. To-day all Spain, southern France, Italy, Turkey and Austria are living on American cotton-seed oil. All an Italian gentleman or laborer wants is oil, macaroni, bread, sugar, wine and coffee. Cotton-seed oil takes the place of meat. It is strange that your southern states have been for years throwing away millions of barrels of beautiful cotton-seed oil and buying unhealthy pork and lard in its place! Corn meal cooked like macaroni with oil and cheese is delicious food, and so cheap!"

The count is right; but he forgets that in France wine no thing is wasted 15,000,000 tons will go as far as 50,000,000 steers in England, or 75,000,000 in prodigate America. There is never a mouthful of meat or grease thrown away in France. France can support a population of 100,000,000 better than England can support a population of 25,000,000.

Governor Tod as a Singer.

[Chicago Tribune.]

Judge R. P. Spaulding told a story about Governor Tod at the reunion of the pioneers of Cleveland, Ohio, recently. "At one time," he said, "I visited my old friend Judge Tod, and during my stay remarked to the judge that his daughter, who was singing in an adjoining room, had a beautiful voice. 'Yes,' said he, 'my children all sing,' and he called for his son David, who entered the room. A greener-looking lad I never saw, a great awkward lout, dressed in jeans and homespun, with a rough, stolid countenance. 'What is your will, father?' he asked. 'David,' said the judge. 'I want you to sing one of your nice songs for this gentleman.' Without expression, without moving a muscle of his face, he started:

'Old Grimes is dead,
That good old man,'

and carried the air through. I was impressed and much amazed. 'Ah,' said my friend, 'there is more in my boy than appears on the surface if it could only be developed. My farm is mortgaged, and I can't afford to give him an education.' 'Send him to me,' I replied 'I will put him to school.' So he did; young David became a lawyer; in ten years he had paid off the mortgage on the old farm, and, later, became governor of Ohio.

Exposing a Mind Reader.

[Chicago Herald.]

At a seance in Dublin a thought reader boasted that he could find a marked pin hid by one of the audience. Several of them came forward, among whom was a confederate. The pin was hid by a Trinity student in an adjoining room, in the presence of the committee, among which was the confederate. The student, suspecting this man from his looks, slyly took away the pin from its hiding place. On the return to the platform the thought reader gazed in the hider's face, and, putting his hand to his brow, was blindfolded and led the student to the hiding place, but of course could find no pin. He returned, acknowledging his defeat, and looking daggers at the confederate. "Now, gentlemen," said the student, "I'll undertake to say that if this 'diviner of the human mind' will do as I tell him, half the audience, without a single hint from me, will know where the pin is," and, turning to the thought reader, he said: "Sit down." He did so. There was a yell, and, jumping up, the thought reader hastily pulled from the seat of his trousers the marked pin.

"He Writ Summat."

Mr. Frederick Daly's book on Henry Irving presents a Stratford anecdote which proves anew the truth of the saying about the prophet and his own country. Just opposite Shakspeare's house one day Mr. Irving met a native and asked him who lived there. "Dunno," was the reply. "Come, come, you must know who lives there. Is his name Shakspeare?" Dunno." "But can't you tell us whether he's alive now?" "Dunno." "But surely you know whether he was famous—whether he ever did anything?" "Yes-es, he—he——" "Well, what did he do?" "He writ summat." "That's it—we were sure you knew all about him; what did he write?" "He writ a Boible."

"Psychic" Phenomena.

[Chronicle "Undertones."]

I am not a spiritualist, but there is far too much evidence of "psychic force," as it has been called, to leave any reasonable doubt of the existence of some form of magnetism which is one of the most marvelous of natural phenomena. Its various demonstrations are called phenomena. In the dictionary meaning of the word they are phenomena, but in the accepted meaning they are not. Scientists have passed over all those subjects as curious freaks of nature. Nature has no freaks. Everything has a deliberate and intelligible cause, and it is the business of science not to disbelieve until it has proved imposture.

The onion is a homely plant,
And rank as most that grows,
And yet it beats, to mix with soup,
The lily or the rose.
—[Merchant Traveler.

PATIENTS' PAPERS.

The Literature Supplied to Sick Folks in the City Hospitals.

A Well-Established Charity—Curious Contributions of Well-Intentioned Persons—How the Society Gets Its Books.

[Philadelphia Times.]

"Oh, yes, we get all kinds of literature," said the clerk at the office of the Society for Distributing Reading Matter to Hospitals as he turned the contents of a news-laden basket on the table and began to sort them over. "You'd be surprised to see some of the stuff we get. Now, here is a paper," holding up a pink-tinted sheet, "that would tax the ingenuity of some of our hospital patients. What is it? Spanish. We don't want too many of that kind. We think nothing, however, of getting papers printed in all the continental languages. It is surprising how many French, German and even Russian publications find their way here.

"These are put aside and distributed in special cases, to the Mariners' library, for instance, and to such institutions as the Seamens' Friends' society. Seamen of all nationalities go there, and an occasional paper, printed in the mother tongue, is greatly appreciated. Now and then we get a Chinese paper. I've often wondered whether they were put in the box by Chinamen. At all events there's very little use for them, for it's an uncommon thing to find a Celestial in a Philadelphia hospital. Some of them, I am told, never have a Chinese patient. We keep the papers as curiosities.

"Most of the papers we get in the boxes are new or of comparatively recent date. Now and then, though, we get a batch filled with antiquated news. Several weeks ago there was a bundle brought in of Public Ledgers a quarter of a century old. Another batch had papers dated as far back as 1843."

"Did you use them?"

"Oh, yes; news isn't of much account to a man on his back. Those poor hospital fellows will read anything. We have three regular boxes now—one at the Broad street station, another at Broad and Chestnut streets and the one in front of this building. The other boxes are special boxes and the collections in them are devoted to individual hospitals. The matter in the boxes is collected every day. We get very little besides newspapers in that way, however. Occasionally Pucks slip in and Harpers and Frank Leslies, too, but the bulk is dailies, especially at the Broad street station box."

"Which papers are the most popular?"

"The colored cartoon papers and the illustrated weeklies. There's always a big demand for them. The daily collections aggregate about twenty-five pounds. It varies, though. In summer, when folks are away, the supply falls very low and we get scarcely enough to go round. Winter is the best time. Our collections are always larger in cold weather. Sometimes they are double. Since the reorganization of the society in 1882 the collections and disbursements have aggregated over four tons.

"We don't depend on the boxes altogether. They don't supply all the literary matter we need or the kind we want. The newspapers are good enough, but they have no permanent value. We prefer magazines, because they can be kept, with care, for a long time. These and the bound books are contributed. Most of them, however, have to be sent for. During the fall and winter we get any number of letters and postals asking us to call and take away pamphlets, magazines and other printed matter, which the writer wishes to give to the society for its hospital work. I have a letter here now from a lady on Arch street. The family are going to Europe and want to 'clean house' before they go. That means a cart-load of books, pamphlets, magazines, weekly and other miscellaneous publications, probably enough to supply the hospitals for a month.

"Some of the matter brought here is as curious as the papers that get into the boxes. One day an energetic little man came rushing into the office all out of breath.

"'Here's a lot of stuff I've brought you,' he puffed, throwing a bundle of books on the table. I thought we had a bonanza. 'Oh, you needn't thank me,' he gurgled before I had time to say anything; 'I don't want 'em—they ain't no good to me. And out he went. What do you suppose was in that bundle? Can't guess? Fourteen cloth-bound volumes of The Congressional Record. Good reading for hot weather, wasn't it?"

"Do the libraries send us much stuff? Oh, yes; there are lots of old books and literature which the libraries no longer find available. The Ridgway library, the Social Art club, the Young Men's Christian association and the Mercantile library all contribute to our store. We're not fastidious and usually what others don't want is just what we need most.

"At present nineteen institutions are regularly supplied by us. How often? Once a week, usually. In summer, when the supply gets at low tide, fortnightly distributions are made. The papers and magazines are made up in bundles of about twenty pounds each. So far as possible each bundle contains an assortment of daily, weekly, religious and illustrated papers and magazines, with books, when they can be obtained. The bundles are tagged and messengers from the several hospitals call and get them. Nearly 500 packages have already been distributed in this way."

Dropped in the Pool.

["Mentor" in Chicago Herald.]

"Here you are at last!" exclaimed a young wife to her husband as he hurriedly entered the station a minute or two before the train's departure. "But what kept you, John? Hurry and get the tickets." "Gimme $10, Mary, I'm out." "Out! Out! Where's that $50 you had two hours ago when we parted over on State street. I should like to know?" "Well, I had had luck to-day, Mary. Happened to walk by a pool place, and of course I stopped to look a minute and dropped the whole fifty right there. Just my infernal luck." "Dropped it? Why didn't you pick it up again? Did it fall in the water?" "Water! What do you mean? No—yes, yes, it fell in the water, and I stayed a long time fishing for it, but could n't find it. But don't worry, Mary, I'm going to be around next fall when they run the water off and then I'll surely find it." "You—you were very careless," said Mary, half crying, "but I don't see what the city wants to leave such pools lying around for in these cholera times, especially. How did you happen to drop it, John?"

Exasperating.

[Exchange.]

"I think," said an exasperated barroom orator, as he slowly elevated himself from the pavement to a perpendicular, "that a full-grown man who throws an orange-peel on the pavement is no Christian." "Well," said a bystander, "what do you think of an orange that throws a full-grown man on the pavement?"

The remark often quoted that "it is impossible for any one to be a good Christian whose liver is out of order" has in it a world of practical truth and wisdom.

WHY SHE WENT TO NEWPORT.

Fold in a Trade Secret by Andromeda to Henrico.

[Yonker's Gazette.]

"Andromeda! there be such tidings i' the air this morn as will thine interest fire to crvid fever."

"This likes mine ear, good sir, for I've but just returned from formal round, and hint-nine arm of something like the 'shakes.'"

"Then is thy preparation fit, me maid, for there is further agitation in' me news."

"Give it to me, then, that I may break me Quaker silence with a quake."

"Have at thee, damosel! Thou knowest Lucullus Marcia?"

"He that is sire to that jade Beatrice, whose alti freights the St. Lath air with onion taint?"

"The same, Andromeda."

"I know him as the parent of a witch whose garments hit her as the pea doth fit the wanting pea."

"Or as these tidings fit thine ear, Araphan. This same Lucullus Marcia hath suspension made, and weighs his assets i' the lesser scale."

"Hath what, Henrico? Pare off the furbishments of this, thy news, and give it me in naked Argo-Saxon."

"It being yet a stripling bit of news, thus do I strip it girl. Lucullus, then, hath failed!"

"Failed, saidst thou? Failed! Oh, that he fates had spared me this, Henrico!"

"Spared thee which? Why, thou belizened one, this hampers not thy credit nor thy sire's, an' wherefore should it grieve thee, then, I pray?"

"Grieve me, thou beetlehead! Dost thou not weigh the outcome of all this? Her father fails, Beatrice goes to Newport or the Branch and drives a dog-cart through the summer tide! With difference twixt the dim per cent he pays and that imposing sum which he owes, she and her sire will a dalliance make with ease and luxury, buy them new poodles and rare bric-a-brac, pose them as objects of the world's quaint sympathy, and, ere the autumn wanes, hie them to Europe for a round of months, and hither bring them back again blazoned with some new lie in heraldry!"

"Marry, Andromeda, an thy wits are ripe!"

"Would that me father's were as ripe, Henrico, for out hath he poled him on the very verge where failure would have whelmed us with its woe, and then some hint of honest me integrity would win him from it, and, like a dog, he'd back to work for honor and the empty fame it brings. O, good me lord! well is it said that he who helps himself is quickest if the tide of booming fortune!"

Gambling and Begging.

"I can remember," said the aged Commodore Garrison, the ten-millionaire bankrupt, the other day to the correspondent of The Buffalo Express, "when it was the ordinary, everyday thing for a merchant, lawyer, or even minister, to walk openly into a lottery office and buy tickets on the afternoon's drawing. There was no concealment about it. The lottery business was an adjunct of many reputable bankers' concerns, and I could name many a present banker or broker whose father dealt in lottery tickets. Indeed, that was considered quite a legitimate branch of banking. Is there a policy shop in New York to-day?"

I told him that the police had for nearly a year enforced the law against lottery gambling, and that whatever was done in that line now was insignificant in amount and carefully kept out of sight.

"It will be so with puts and calls very soon," the commodore said; "Russell Sage has already made up his mind, I am told, never to sell a put or a call again, and I doubt if that feature of speculation will be revived again to any extent. Operations on margins will be next, and finally speculation will be practically confined to bona fide purchases and sales of securities. Public sentiment is now such that a law on the subject could be enforced."

A Plague of Manuscripts.

[London Letter.]

The plague of manuscripts has fallen upon Tennyson, as the plague of flies fell upon Pharaoh, or the rats on Bishop Hatto. It is said that since he bid the lyric laurel in the coronet his average receipt of outpourings from amateur genius reaches 200 distinct and several envelopes per diem. Romance, poetry, biography, the ode, the epic, even the sermon, are submitted by the cartful. Statisticians can take a line from the fact that over 1,100 effusions in all meters on the epic, Gordon in the Soudan, have been sent to the great rhymester, with a request that he would read, mark, and speedily report on the same. Again, the quantity of manuscript in the shape of three-volume novels alone has been estimated to weigh over three tons. "The poet in a golden clime was born," but he titled bard who brags of the fact had not reckoned when he wrote it upon the penalty to follow through the penny and the parcels post.

FREEDOM.

[Philadelphia Call.]

"I like to be free," said the happy maid,
"And I never will be a wife,
For the yoke mayn't always with roses be lined,
That the married folks wear through life."

But the years danced on, a flirting with youth,
And the pretty maid often would sigh
For the something that never came into her life,
And she couldn't keep happiness nigh.

And the spring-time of life was wearing away,
While the summer was nearing apace,
And still she would sigh for the something unknown,
For the goal that was worthy the race.

But it came one day in a great honest love,
And her heart didn't turn it away,
For a new world had opened its portals to her,
And her sighs turned to singing, they say.

And she sang that no freedom is ever complete
For the heart where a love doesn't dwell;
As they only are free who can love and be loved,
And the truest are freest as well!

Regular Habits.

[Burdette.]

"For ten years past," said the new boarder, "my habits have been regular as clock work. I rose on the stroke of 6; half an hour later I sat down to breakfast; at 7 I was at work; dined at 12, ate supper at 6, and was in bed at 9:30; ate only hearty food, and hadn't a sick day in all that time."

"Dear me," said the deacon, in sympathetic tones, "and what were you in for?"

And in the awful silence that followed you could hear the hash grate its teeth.

For Earache.

It is said that by the following simple method almost instant relief of earache is afforded: Put five drops of chloroform on a little cotton or wool in the bowl of a clay pipe, then blow the vapor through the stem into the aching ear.